Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A conversational portal system, comprising:

a computing system ~~comprising~~ that executes a conversational browser to provide a ~~conversational~~ user interface that ~~enables a client access to the conversational portal system across a plurality of different modalities including an audio modality and a non-audio modality, wherein the conversational browser~~ adapts an interaction dialog between the conversational portal system and ~~the~~ a client ~~based on~~ according to one more modalities supported by ~~of~~ the client, and wherein the conversational browser can ~~perform conversational browsing to~~ retrieve one or more pages from an information source in response to a request from the client and serve or present the retrieved pages to the client in at least one format that is compatible with the one or more modalities supported by ~~of~~ the client, wherein the at least one format comprises a multi-modal format that can be rendered in two or more synchronized modalities,

an audio indexing system for segmenting and indexing audio and multimedia data obtained from an information source; and

a multimedia database for storing the indexed audio and multimedia data,

wherein the conversational portal maintains, for a registered subscriber, a program comprising user-selected multimedia segments in the multimedia database to provide a multimedia broadcast on demand service to the registered subscriber.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 1, wherein the multi-modal format is a modality-independent format.

4. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 1, wherein the computing system further comprises a transcoder, operatively associated with the conversational browser, for converting a page having a multi-modal format into at least one modality-specific format.

5. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 1, wherein the conversational portal detects a modality of the client.

6. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 5, wherein the conversational portal detects the modality of the client based on one of registration protocols and identification of an access channel.

7. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 1, wherein the computing system further comprises a portal directory database, accessible by the conversational browser, for storing one of an index of information sources, information associated with information sources, and a combination thereof.

8. (Original) The conversational portal of claim 7, wherein the information, which is stored in the portal directory database associated with the information sources, is maintained in a multi-modal format by a service provider of the conversational portal under business agreements between the service provider of the conversational portal and service providers of the information sources.

9. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 1, wherein the computing system further comprises a capture module for capturing a connection between the client and the conversational portal and holding the client captive during predetermined time periods.

10. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 9, wherein the client is held captive between a time period where a link provided by the conversational browser is selected by the client and one or rendered and served to the client.

11. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 10, wherein the client is released when a link is directly requested by the client.

12. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 9, wherein the computing system provides one of advertisements, services and a combination thereof to the client, during at least one predetermined time period in which the client is held captive.

13. (Original) The conversational portal of claim 12, wherein the at least one predetermined time period is a time period between fetching links between different information sources.

14. (Original) The conversational portal of claim 12, wherein the advertisements and services are multi-modal.

15. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 12, wherein the advertisements and services are provided on behalf of a third-party under a business agreement between a service provider of the conversational portal and the third-party.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) The conversational portal of claim 16, wherein the conversational browser obtains desired segments from the multimedia database in response to a client request and presents such segments to the client based on a modality of the client.

18. (Original) The conversational portal of claim 16, wherein the conversational browser periodically downloads multimedia data from at least one information source to index and store the multimedia data in the multimedia database.

19. (Original) The conversational portal of claim 18, wherein the downloading and indexing of the multimedia data of the at least one information source is performed under a business agreement between a service provider of the conversational portal and a service provider of the at least one information source.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) The conversational portal of claim 1 20, wherein the registered subscriber can use the client to conversationally navigate the program and select desired segments for broadcasting.

22. (Currently Amended) The conversational portal of claim 1 20, wherein the program comprises radio on demand service which the registered subscriber accesses via a wireless phone client.

23. (Currently Amended) A system for accessing information, comprising:

an access device having at least one modality;

a content server; and

a conversational portal system comprising:

a conversational browser that is executable to provides a conversational user interface to access the conversational portal system across a plurality of different modalities including an audio modality and a non-audio modality, wherein the conversational browser adapts an interaction dialog with the access device according to one or more modalities supported by based on the at least one modality of the access device, and wherein the conversational browser can retrieve perform conversational browsing by retrieving one or more pages from the content server in response to a request communicated from the access device and serve or present serving or presenting the retrieved pages to the access device in at least one format that is compatible with the one or more modalities supported by at least one modality of the access device, wherein the at least one format comprises a multi-modal format that can be rendered in two or more synchronized modalities;

an audio indexing system for segmenting and indexing audio and multimedia data obtained from an information source; and

a multimedia database for storing the indexed audio and multimedia data,

wherein the conversational portal maintains, for a registered subscriber, a program comprising user-selected multimedia segments in the multimedia database to provide a multimedia broadcast on demand service to the registered subscriber.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the multi-modal format is a modality-independent format.

26. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the conversational browser can render a multi-modal content page or multi-modal application into a presentation format that is compatible with the at least one modality of the access device.

27. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the conversational portal system comprises a portal transcoder for converting a multi-modal content page or multi-modal application into at least one modality-specific representation based on a detected modality of the access device.

28. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 23, further comprising a proxy transcoder, accessible by the conversational portal system, for converting a modality-specific content into a multi-modal representation.

29. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 28, wherein the proxy transcoder provides a transcoding service that is offered by a provider of the content or by a third-party under a business agreement with the provider of the content.

30. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the access device is a multi-modal device that executes a local conversational browser for processing and presenting one of a multi-modal content page and application received by from the conversational portal.

31. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein the conversational portal is accessed by calling a predesignated telephone number.

32. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein the conversational portal comprises a portal directory database comprising a directory of content server addresses.

33. (Original) The system of claim 32, wherein the portal directory database comprises one of multi-modal content pages, multi-modal applications, and both associated with at least one content provider, which are hosted by the conversational portal.

34. (Currently Amended) A method for providing access to information over a communications network, comprising the steps of:

establishing communication with a conversational portal using an access device having at least one modality associated therewith;

the conversational portal adapting an interaction dialog with the access device based on the at least one modality of the access device, wherein adapting the interaction dialog includes adapting the interaction dialog to an audio modality and a non-audio modality;

retrieving, by the conversational portal, a content page in response to a user request;

presenting or serving, by the conversational portal, the content page to the user in at least one format that is compatible with the at least one modality of the access device, wherein the at least one format comprises a multi-modal format that can be rendered in two or more synchronized modalities; and

maintaining, by the conversational portal, a program for a registered subscriber, to provide a multimedia broadcast on demand service to the registered subscriber.

35. (Canceled)

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, further comprising the steps of:

detecting, by the conversational portal, at least one modality of the access device; and

transcoding the retrieved content page into at least one modality-specific format corresponding to the at least one detected modality.

37. (Original) The method of claim 34, further comprising the steps of:

holding the user captive during a period in which the retrieving step is executed; and

presenting one of advertisements, services and a combination thereof to the user during a predetermined time period in which the user is held captive.

38. (Canceled)